

District Attorney O'Keefe Testified to Improve Impaired Driving Laws



Cape and Islands District Attorney Michael O'Keefe and Essex District Attorney Jonathan W. Blodgett testified before the Joint Committee on the Judiciary on November 3, 2011 to express the unanimous support of all 11 District Attorneys for S.B. 678, An Act to Protect the Citizens of the Commonwealth from Drunk Drivers.

This bill re-writes the Massachusetts impaired driving laws to make them clear and concise – it does not make substantive changes to the laws, but it does make them more easily understandable for judges, defense attorneys, prosecutors, defendants and the general public.

The impaired driving laws first came onto the books of the Commonwealth 100 years ago and have been amended 69 times. This bill imposes a structure and order on those laws by defining the key terms and laying out each criminal offense followed by its civil fines and Registry consequences. The bill is sponsored by Senator Katherine M. Clark of Melrose and is supported by the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association, the Massachusetts Bar Association and the Boston Bar Association. This is a neutral, good-government bill that costs nothing to implement and will assist all participants in the criminal justice system. The District Attorneys thank the bar associations for their strong support of this bill and urge the legislature to pass it.

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